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THE CHANGING CITY CHURCH

BY

CARL DOUGLAS WELLS

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THE CHANGING CITY CHURCH

By

CARL DOUGLAS WELLS

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FOREWORD

AS A FOUNDATION for the study of the church in the city the author has made a long and painstaking examination of the experiences of a prominent religious group in the United States. The results may be taken seriously not only by the members of this group but by friends of all similar denominations in this country, in fact, by millions of church members, and especially by all those who are disturbed over certain failures of churches under modern urban conditions.

While the five sections of this published report are but samples of a larger study made by Dr. Wells, each of the sections makes its own distinct contribution to the understanding of religious and church problems. The first section points out the problems involved in transferring a religious heritage from a rural to an urban environment; the second compares the behavior of the urban church having a rural heritage with the motion picture institution having urban backgrounds; the third analyzes three active types and three inactive types of religious personalities; the fourth distinguishes carefully between reactionary conservatives and liberal conservatives among churches, since the churches studied fell chiefly into these two categories rather than into conservative, progressive, and radical; and the fifth indicates six procedures that a city church needs to develop if it would function more satisfactorily in urban life.

In the sociological approach to the church as a human institution Dr. Wells shows clear insight and uses sound judgment. Whether read as a sociological treatise or as a guide to reorganizing church activities this document will prove illuminating.

EMORY S. BOGARDUS



PREFACE

THIS MONOGRAPH is a digest of a dissertation submitted to the University of Southern California for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, *A Changing Social Institution in an Urban Environment: A study of the changing behavior patterns of the Disciples of Christ in Los Angeles*. It is based upon the findings of a two-year study of the Disciples of Christ in Los Angeles, which is the fourth largest Protestant group in the city, with eleven thousand members in forty churches. Chapters I to V of this monograph were originally published as articles in *Sociology and Social Research*, and are herewith reprinted, slightly revised, with the kind consent of the original publishers.

The purpose of the study was to discover the effect upon an institution of transplanting it from a rural environment to an urban environment. The Disciples of Christ were chosen for study partly because of their distinct rural heritage and partly because of the author's intimate association and acquaintance with them. It is hoped that this study may provide a few helpful suggestions for those urban religious leaders who find themselves somewhat baffled by their difficult task of meeting the pressing religious needs of urban people through a church adapted to rural needs and possessing a long rural heritage.

Literally hundreds of members and leaders of the Disciples of Christ in Los Angeles have given unstintingly of their time and effort in the process of developing this study. In addition, a large number of religious leaders of other groups in Los Angeles and many research workers have contributed much to the study. For all this help, so freely given, the writer desires to express his sincere appreciation.

CARL DOUGLAS WELLS



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CHAPTER I

THE EFFECTS OF URBAN EXPERIENCE ON RELIGIOUS LOYALTY

MANY STUDIES have been made in recent years which uniformly reveal that organized religion is having difficulty in attracting the inhabitants of our large cities.¹ In Los Angeles in 1926, a careful estimate found that 1,059,375 (or 840,375 over 10 years of age) of the city's 1,350,000 inhabitants, or 74.3 per cent of the total adult population, were not members of any religious group, Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish.²

The findings presented in this chapter were obtained by a study of the religious experiences of the members of the Disciples of Christ in Los Angeles. The experiences of some two hundred members of this group now living in Los Angeles were collected from representative members, young and old, followers and leaders, active and inactive in their church relationships. Fifty of these members were selected for careful study by the life history method, while the rest were studied by the case study approach.

The experiences found in this study fall into two main divisions,—those promoting loyalty to the church and those promoting disloyalty to the church. Although all of the experiences studied are of members of the Disciples of

¹ See H. Paul Douglass: *The St. Louis Survey* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1924), p. 215; also his *Springfield Church Survey* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1926), p. 120; W. P. Lemon: "Our Religious Survey" (a news note), *The Christian Century*, October 9, 1929. These show that in St. Louis one fourth of the population, in Springfield one third, and in Minneapolis 60 per cent of the best residential sections were not being reached by organized religion. Moreover, these studies reveal that a large proportion of urban church members are inactive.

² George Burlingame: "How Religious is the City of Los Angeles?" *Los Angeles Sunday Times* (August 28, 1927), Part II, pp. 1 and 10.

Christ now living in Los Angeles, a large proportion of these members have lived a part of their lives in rural areas.³ These experiences deserve and have been given some consideration in this study because of the perspective that they afford of the experiences of people who have moved into an urban environment.

A careful analysis of the cases under consideration has suggested the following tentative conclusions concerning the effect of certain types of experience upon religious loyalty. While these conclusions are arrived at by the inductive method and are, therefore, valid statements describing the data under consideration, a wider distribution of cases will either strengthen or modify the conclusions of this study and elevate them to the status of principles.

A. CONCLUSIONS REGARDING EXPERIENCES PROMOTING LOYALTY TO THE CHURCH

1. Satisfying experiences with organized religion in early childhood are very influential in the development of religious loyalty, no matter whether the individual changes his environment in later years or not.
2. In a homogeneous rural environment, deep personal religious loyalties are born which tend to exert a strong integrative influence toward religious institutions.
3. When early home influences cultivate a religious loyalty, especially if the mother is strongly religious, the child is strongly conditioned to the church.
4. An awe-inspiring religious experience in early childhood will remain through life as an integrating influence to the individual.
5. Conversion experiences tend to be integrative in the degree in which they are permeated with emotion. Emotional content may be given to the conversion experience through ritualistic devices, through crowd contagion, which is especially strong in religious revivals,

³ In a statistical study of this problem among the Disciples of Christ in Los Angeles, the writer found that 438 members out of 581, or 75.3 per cent of a random sample, had lived in a place of 2,500 or less in population; 262 were converted in such a place; 273 were converted in a place of 2,500 to 25,000 in population. Thus, a total of 535 out of 581 indicated this degree of ruralization.

through implanting of beliefs concerning eternal punishments or rewards connected with the rite, and through a sense of complete identification with the sacred community or with deity.

6. A well-integrated religious individual or group may transplant a body of religious beliefs and practices into an uncongenial environment, and by the use of unnatural "hothouse" methods may make these beliefs and practices function acceptably.

7. An intellectual individual or family may retain its religious institutional loyalty and at the same time gradually adapt its religious beliefs and practices to its changed environment on a more or less individualistic basis.

8. When a well adjusted religious ruralite is suddenly transplanted to an urban area, and when in this new environment the personal satisfactions offered by the group fail to include and even run counter to his religious values, this person is likely to become religiously a reactionary.

9. When urban experience, uninfluenced by the stabilizing force of religion, becomes erratic and dissipative, idealistic youth, especially if under the influence of romantic love, may choose to develop loyalty to an emotionally satisfying religious institution in spite of intellectual difficulties involved, in case the church teaches doctrines which the person cannot accept intellectually.

10. A shocking religious experience is integrative instead of disintegrative if it is strong enough to challenge but not strong enough to overcome the stability of the person's religious organization.

These conclusions concerning integrative religious experiences of city dwellers have many obvious implications concerning religious strength and weakness in city life. Thus, strong favorable childhood religious experiences condition people to the church so that much resistance is given to disintegrating forces in later years. This helps to explain why many people remain loyal to religious institutions after these institutions have largely ceased to contribute to their spiritual needs. Similarly, emotional conversion experiences become strong conditioning factors throughout the rest of life, binding members to the church.

Social and intellectual isolation from disintegrating forces in urban life are effective devices for maintaining religious loyalty to a "rural" religious system in an urban environment. Those intellectually able, however, may effect urban adaptations quite in advance of the institutional machinery of their church. Unsatisfactory urban adaptations in the general field of city life may resuscitate or deepen one's loyalty to the emotionally satisfying religious institutions. Likewise, a shocking experience may lend new meaning and deeper emotional tone to one's religious loyalty.

B. CONCLUSIONS REGARDING EXPERIENCES
PROMOTING DISLOYALTY OF THE URBANITE
TO THE CHURCH

Childhood experiences may encourage disloyalty to religious institutions, as the following three conclusions indicate:

11. An irreligious, loosely religious, or insincerely religious home environment fails to exert an influence toward the development of religious loyalty in children.

12. When children are forced to go to Sunday school or church against their will, resentment breeds future disloyalty to the church.

13. Children in ministers' families are often overstimulated toward religious loyalty and consequently react against the church.

Offsetting our fifth conclusion, the following statements reveal the possibilities of dissipating the potential values of conversion as a promoter of religious loyalty:

14. Exaggerated emotional appeals, such as were common in the old-fashioned revival, tend to have the opposite emotional effect from that intended when individuals fail to enter into the general emotional contagion of the meeting. This tends to discourage religious loyalty on the part of the individual.

15. Overurging toward conversion by a person of low status among one's associates tends to drive one from the church.

16. Emotional contagion of the old-fashioned revival often brings persons to the altar who are unprepared for such a step. The result of such a situation is a reaction against the church by the one so "trapped."

17. A premature religious conversion is often looked back upon with regret, having a total negative value with regard to religious loyalty.

18. An ugly or distorted conversion ritual or one causing unexpected physical discomfort (as baptism by immersion in an unexpectedly cold body of water) may have a displeasing or even a revolting effect upon the candidate. This is a failure at a critical point to develop loyalty to the church.

Following conversion, many pitfalls await the Christian neophyte in the modern large city, as the following conclusions indicate:

19. Urban anonymity furnishes easy shelter for one whose loyalty to the church has been based upon outer controls, such as public opinion or parental control.

20. Prolonged overburdening of the "faithful few" in a poorly organized or weakened church, on the one hand, or failure of members to participate in religious activity, on the other hand, will tend to undermine religious loyalty.

21. Education in new ideas which run counter to one's religious beliefs, such as is often the case in college courses, tends at least temporarily to undermine religious loyalty. In such cases, loyalty may be won back either through religious reactionary development or by a new religious integration which includes these new ideas.

22. When loss of status in a *respected* group results from religious loyalty, regardless of the person's own beliefs, this experience tends to weaken religious loyalty.

23. When a person discovers that one or more of his religious leaders are hypocritical or immoral in their religious or secular activities or that they are teaching religious beliefs which do not square with his experience and, therefore, must be regarded by him as false, resentment and loss of loyalty to the church usually result.

24. When other institutions have succeeded even temporarily in winning away the member's loyalty from his weakened church, the possibilities of still further reducing this loyalty are great.

A number of cases were found where comparatively well adapted urban churches failed to reintegrate a flagging religious loyalty of members whose religious patterns were rural. The next two conclusions must suffice to cover these cases:

25. When a member is adjusted to rural religious behavior patterns, such things as the following may give him a feeling of estrangement from even the slightly adapted urban church: (1) non-doctrinal sermons, (2) lack of "rural" friendliness and hospitality, and (3) "unnecessary" expenditures which accompany urban specialization and efficiency.

26. Since changes in religious beliefs among urban church members do not occur evenly, a strained relationship results from a recognition of this fact among the members; this often results both in the calling of names (cf. "hypocrite" and "heretic") and in introvertive self-accusation; in either case, the bases of personal religious loyalty tend to be weakened.

In our tenth conclusion, it was indicated that shocking experiences may be integrative of religious loyalty under certain conditions. However, they are probably more often disintegrative. The following four conclusions are based upon such cases:

27. If a man borrows money from a fellow churchman, especially if it is from a church leader, it is sometimes true that the borrower expects the current business ethics to be replaced by the ethics of religious brotherhood; if this is not done, or if business ethics even worse than the current standards are practiced by the lender, and the deal ends disastrously for the borrower, the church may receive the blame and religious loyalty thereto cease.

28. When a strong but somewhat erratic belief is held regarding the efficacy of prayer or faith, and a major crisis arises where this belief is thoroughly tested and found to be untrue, there is a tend-

ency to lose faith in all religion; the strength of such a tendency may be gauged by the seriousness of the disappointment and the depth of previous religious integration.

29. When a church member engages in a type of activity which is more or less frowned upon by the church and continues to keep his church relationships intact, he is confronted with a growing attitude of coldness and inhospitality; an appeal to the church's loyalty to him in time of need is likely to be refused, and this, in turn, may cause him to turn violently against all organized religion.

30. Since a minister is traditionally the symbol of institutional stability in a community, the breakdown of this stability, as in divorce, sex scandal, or dishonesty on his part, often proves a shock to members, who transfer the blame to religion and cease to be loyal to the church.

A careful review of these thirty generalized conclusions based upon a study of the religious experiences of a single urban religious group indicates that practically every conclusion may be traced either directly or indirectly to the problem of transferring a religious heritage from a rural to an urban environment. A weakening social heritage in home and community results in a weakened loyalty to the church. This in turn weakens the church as an institution and gives rise to further difficulties and weaknesses within the institution. When the disintegrative factors are compared with the integrative factors described in the first part of this chapter, one is not surprised at the difficulty with which adjustment to city life is made by the church.

CHAPTER II

THE MOTION PICTURE VERSUS THE CHURCH

THE URBAN adaptation of a social institution in the city may be measured by its ability to attract and hold a following among city dwellers. On this basis, the urban Protestant church and the motion picture theater furnish an interesting comparison; and such a comparison is enlightening as a study of why certain institutions in city life are more popular than others.

In spite of the fact that the church and the movie are basically dissimilar in many ways, there are certain likenesses which cause a thoughtful student of city life to link them for study. Thus, both are community institutions, appealing to the voluntary support of their patrons; both center their activities in buildings which have beauty as an important requisite, and whose central attraction is a large auditorium with attention focalized on a platform at the front of the room; and finally, the audience is largely of the nonparticipating spectator type. That one appeals to a religious clientele and the other to pleasure seekers need not obscure the fact that these institutions have definite similarities both in form and function. Frederick L. Collins has gone so far as to refer to the movie as "the new meeting house."¹

Perhaps the most basic contrast between these two institutions is that the church has an immediate *rural* heritage while the movie has a distinct *urban* heritage. The Protestant church took its roots in American life when the vast

¹ "Around the corner from what used to be the old meeting house is the motion picture theater which is, for thousands and millions of people, the new meeting house."—Frederick L. Collins, "Shall We Bury Our Dead Churches?" *Woman's Home Companion*, November, 1929, p. 21.

majority of Americans lived in rural areas.² For this reason it seems only natural that in its long formative period, rural folkways and mores, ceremonies and conventions have been deeply imbedded in the heritage of the church. The motion picture theater, on the other hand, was scarcely known twenty-five years ago, so the "dead hand of the past" does not lie heavily upon it. Moreover, its birthplace was the city, and it has lived almost all of its life within the city.

As a result of their differing environments in their formative years, the church has developed into a *primary* group institution, while the movie has become a *secondary* group institution.³ The church, as a primary group institution, adopts such mottoes as "The Homelike Church," or "The Friendly Church." The minister tries to shake the hand of everyone present at a church service. The parishioners expect to have a pastoral visitation within their homes occasionally as a manifestation of an intimate personal relationship. Members want to know each other by the first name, and they visit conspicuously in the aisles both before and after worship services, often obstructing the efficient movement of the church's program. Church socials and "cottage prayer meetings" add to the development of the primary group life.

The movie, on the other hand, like other secondary group institutions, such as the newspaper and the radio, maintains a cold impersonal relationship with its patrons. No theater manager greets his patrons at the door and inquires after their health. Instead, the patron's first contact with

² To this day, the Protestant church retains its greatest strength in areas which are little affected by urban influences. In cities, the church's membership is made up largely of people with rural backgrounds. For statistics of the Disciples of Christ in Los Angeles see footnote 3, p. 2.

³ See C. H. Cooley, *Social Organization* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909), pp. 23 f.

the movie is at the ticket-seller's window, and thence he is conducted swiftly and efficiently by a uniformed, impersonal usher into the congenial darkness which isolates one from all others and creates the anonymity so desired by the urbanite. The performance is continuous, so one may drop in and out at will, and the sumptuous lobbies and waiting rooms are practically deserted, in contrast to the noisy visiting found on the fringes of a worship service.

The church in the city is notoriously *inefficient* and *slow* of movement, but the movie is characterized by a high *efficiency* and *swift* movement. In the old rural economy, there was little demand for efficiency and speed. Everyone knew those with whom he came into business contact, and familiarity and sympathy excused many breaches of efficiency which, on a more impersonal plane, would not have been tolerated. Moreover, as movement in an inefficient rural culture was slow, so the traditional worship tempo is also slow. In the city, however, efficiency and swift movement are important new norms which are promoted easily in an impersonal, unsympathetic, highly competitive society.

Another important contrast is found in the different bases of appeal of the two institutions. The church appeals primarily to what Thomas would call the fundamental *wish for security*, which is aimed at conserving the values existent already in the heritage.⁴ Our swiftly moving society is not too friendly to this backward-looking appeal, despite its venerable tradition. The movie, on the other hand, appeals primarily to the fundamental *wish for new experience*, as Thomas calls it. This more aggressive, forward-looking appeal is obviously more popular in the ur-

⁴ For a discussion of Thomas's famous four wishes, see R. E. Park and H. E. Miller, *Old World Traits Transplanted* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1921), pp. 27 f.

ban culture where institutions are new and little thought is given to tradition.

Again, while the main goal of the church is the development of a religious attitude toward life through the *worship* of God, the main goal of the movie is the perfection of a form of *entertainment*. The church aims to relax tense nerves, strengthen the will, and steady the emotional controls of life, and to develop a large balanced view of life and plan of action. This goal is obviously basic in life in any culture, and, though unpopular in city life at present, will doubtless come into more popularity as the city grows older and the technique of the church becomes more adaptive to city life. The movie, while, like the church, aiming to relax nervous tensions, also tends to stimulate the individual so that he will obtain emotional thrills and satisfactions, and may live vicariously along lines often inhibited in real life.

Finally, one of the most revealing contrasts, from the viewpoint of one who would understand the differing degrees of success achieved by the two institutions, is furnished by the techniques employed by each. The church's technique is *traditional*, while the movie employs a *novel* technique. The church appeals to memories and shibboleths, to "Thus saith the Lord," and to the "Faith once and for all delivered unto the saints." Older themes are employed, usually selected from early Hebrew times, and timely applications are made. The mechanics of this application are found in the homily, the exhortation, ritual, ceremony, and congregational singing and chanting. The movie, on the other hand, leaves tradition conspicuously out of its appeal and turns rather to the basic strong human desires: sex, romance, beauty, mastery, et cetera. The themes employed are timely, such as gangs, fads, war, flying, the vacation period, the stock market, travel, and so on.

The mechanics employed embrace the story, drama, artistically chosen and rendered music, colorful lighting effects, and, more recently, carefully worked out talkie effects.

If one considered only the relative intrinsic value of the church and the movie as institutions of society, it would be hard to believe that the movie commands a stronger loyalty of the urbanite than does the church.⁵ The two principal reasons for this paradoxical situation seem to be (1) the present mood of the young sophisticated impersonalized efficiency-worshiping city where social change is so rapid that tradition can secure scarcely any status, and (2) the fact that the technique of the church is yet poorly adapted to the city's life. The low status of the urban church can be improved somewhat by a study of more urbanized social institutions such as the movie; but the high status which the church deserves in any society will perhaps never be achieved until the present rapid social change in urban society gives way to more stable influences which will permit the development of an urban tradition which then may be emotionalized by religious institutional development.

Chart I summarizes in graphic form, the main points of this discussion. At the left seven sets of characteristics of the church are set forth in abbreviated form, and at the right, paralleling each of these items, are related statements concerning the motion picture. By reading across from left to right seven sets of differences between the church and the motion picture may be noted.

⁵ In Los Angeles, while the moving picture theaters sell approximately a million tickets per week, a careful survey in 1926 revealed 290,625 church members, Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant. Of this number, 142,625 were Protestants.

CHART I.

CONTRAST OF THE CHURCH (WITH AN IMMEDIATE RURAL HERITAGE)
WITH THE MOVIE (WHICH ORIGINATED IN THE CITY, APPEALS TO
CITY PEOPLE, AND IS ADJUSTED TO CITY LIFE).

The Church

vs.

The Movie

A primary group institution.
Cf. handshaking, Motto: "The Homelike Church," visiting in aisle before and after church, pastoral visitation, home socials, et cetera.

Inefficiency and slow movement. Efficiency is not so important in the old economy; personal sympathy and familiarity did not urge its development; slow movement is rural tempo as well as traditional worship tempo.

Appeals primarily to the fundamental wish for *Security* (Conservative) which is not so popular in our modern swift-moving society. (Backward-looking)—trailing a long, venerable tradition.

Its main goal: *Worship* of God, relaxation, strengthening and steadying mental and emotional controls, and developing large balanced view of life and plan of action. Though unpopular now, this goal is basic in life and could easily be made popular by use of a proper technique.

A secondary group institution. Cf. impersonal, congenial darkness which isolates from others, creating anonymity so desired by urbanite. Continuous performance, no visiting in lobby as at church.

Efficiency and swift movement. These are important new norms created by urbanization, promoted easily in an impersonal, unsympathetic, highly competitive society.

Appeals primarily to the fundamental wish for *New Experience* (Aggressive) which is very popular in our modern swift-moving society. (Forward-looking)—a new institution with little or no tradition.

Its main goal: *Entertainment*, relaxation, stimulation to obtain mental and emotional thrills and satisfactions, vicarious experience along lines often inhibited in real life.

The Church

vs.

The Movie

Its technique is *Traditional*: appeals directly to memories, shibboleths, "Thus saith the Lord," "Faith of our Fathers," et cetera, *via* older themes, with timely application.

Mechanics: Homily, exhortation, ritual, congregational singing which is the envy and despair of the movie.

Its strongest points: *Concepts* of larger life, brotherhood of man, synthesis of experience, mysticism, sacredness and unity of life. Conserves culture heritage. Static.

Its technique is *Novel*: appeals directly to strong human desires: sex, romantic love, beauty, mastery, et cetera, *via* timely themes (gangs, fads, war, flying, et cetera).

Mechanics: The story, drama, artistically chosen and rendered music, colorful lighting effects, and talkie effects.

Its strongest point: *Technique* adapted to the urban mind and fitting urban needs, so far as methodology is concerned. Aids in creation of new culture. Dynamic.

CHAPTER III

RELIGIOUS PERSONALITY TYPES

JUST AS a foot race classifies the contestants according to their ability to "run the good race," so a rapidly shifting social order such as ours is a good testing ground for the more general abilities brought into play in making a total personal adjustment to environment. People differ in two ways in meeting this test: some are emotionally more susceptible than others, and some are more intellectually acute in discriminating values and inconsistencies between sets of values. According to tests of these factors, persons may be divided into personality types, somewhat as runners may be divided into classes at the end of a 100-yard dash.

An early and rather crude attempt to so classify persons was made by William James at the beginning of this century. He grouped all people according to temperament as "tough-minded" and "tender-minded."¹ The former he characterized as roughshod in their handling of religious dogma, being more responsive to new scientific developments than to authoritative religious statements; the latter he characterized as "religious" idealists, supporters of the present organized religious institutions. A. B. Wolfe later made a threefold classification of personality types into Conservatives, Radicals, and Scientific Minds.² W. I. Thomas has given one of the most careful descriptions of these three types, which he calls the Philistine, the Bohe-

¹ See William James, *Pragmatism* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1907), pp. 12-18.

² See A. B. Wolfe, *Conservatism, Radicalism and the Scientific Mind*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1923), Chap. II, especially pp. 11-13. Wolfe further subdivides these types, indicating two degrees of conservatism (reactionary and conservative), and two degrees of radicalism (liberal and radical).

mian, and the Creative Personality type.³ While the above-mentioned classifications apply to general personality types, they fit equally well in describing segmented personality types, such as the political, familial, or religious personality types.

The original classification of religious personality types described below was worked out in an attempt to classify the religious personality types found in a study of the Disciples of Christ in Los Angeles. A comparison of the classification herein presented with those already described is easily seen in Chart II. At the left it will be observed that all church members are divided into active and inactive. By reading from left to right a threefold division of active members into fundamentalists, modernists, and progressives will be found. It will also be noted that inactive members are divided into backsliders, heretics, and individualists.

In the lower half of Chart II the names of three authorities in the field, together with their classifications and personalities, are given. The reader will be able to make interesting comparisons as he reads down the list of types in each of the columns labeled I, II, III.

CHART II

RELIGIOUS PERSONALITY TYPES

	I	II	III
Active Members	Fundamentalist	Modernist	Progressive
Inactive Members	Backslider	Heretic	Individualist
Corresponding general types described by:			
James	Tender-minded	Tough-minded	-----
Wolfe	Conservative	Radical	Scientific Mind
Thomas	Philistine	Bohemian	Creative Mind.

³ For a careful statement of Thomas's classification see W. I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1927, second edition, Vol. II), pp. 1853-59. This entire reference should be read in this connection.

The general characteristics of these three active and inactive types are outlined in the same order in Chart III. At the left will be found four statements giving characteristics of religious and personality types noted in Chart II. The middle column and the column at the right give statements contrasting with the materials at the left, point by point.

CHART III

CHARACTERISTICS OF RELIGIOUS PERSONALITY TYPES

I	II	III
Seem relatively insensitive to intellectual inconsistencies, somewhat as the unmusical are insensitive to discordant notes.	Seem relatively susceptible to intellectual inconsistencies, as some artists for whom a few discordant notes spoil a concert.	Though sensitive to emotional appeal, an attempt to use this appeal while ignoring or violating intellectual organization results in opposite emotion from the one desired.
Motivated by old emotional stimuli more than by new intellectual stimuli.	Motivated by new intellectual stimuli more than by old emotional stimuli.	Motivated about equally by emotion and intellect.
When faced with a new element or a series of such, as in migration from rural to urban centers, the tendency is to minimize the importance of the new and exaggerate the importance of the old.	When faced with a new element or a series of such, as in migration from rural to urban centers, the tendency is to minimize the importance of the old and exaggerate the importance of the new.	When faced with a new element or a series of such, as in migration from rural to urban centers, the tendency is to evaluate carefully the elements in both old and new, retaining the best in the old, accepting the best in the new, creating a new synthesis of experience.
Mostly older people, and church pillars, whose life organization is "set" before new elements come into their lives.	Mostly young people, whose life organization is plastic when new elements intrude themselves into their lives.	Relatively few here, mostly intellectually trained.

A careful definition and illustration of each of the three active types and the three inactive types will clarify their characteristics and interrelations.

A. ACTIVE CHURCH MEMBERS

I. The *Fundamentalist* is the religious type who clings tenaciously to the old familiar (i.e., "fundamental") religious beliefs and practices, resisting vigorously all attempts to weaken or change them in order to adapt their religious beliefs to the current developing or changing knowledge.

The churches of today have lost their clear vision of truth, of "the eternal verities." By that I mean that they no longer accept the authority of the Bible as the infallible word of God. They have been seized by ministers trained in the rationalistic philosophy by our institutes and seminaries which failed to resist but meekly accepted such encroachments. They have attempted to supplant faith by reason.⁴

II. The *Modernist* is the religious type who, seeing the weakness of the position of the Fundamentalist, has reacted against it and tends to become an extremist in the opposite direction. Being strongly conditioned previously to loyalty to the church or in an environment congenial to his viewpoint, he remains in the church but tries to work out extreme reforms. His attitude toward the Fundamentalist is one of hostility. A large majority of church members approach the Fundamentalist type rather than the Modernistic type. It is difficult to create a strong emotional loyalty to new ideas, so most potential Modernists drop out of active relations with the church and drift into the more numerous class of "Heretics" which is described below.

⁴ Dr. J. Oliver Buswell, President of Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, in a statement given out to newspaper reporters during the World's Christian Fundamentalist Association in Los Angeles, June, 1930.

Says a Modernist minister in a published sermon, in explaining the "loosening hold of the church on the twentieth century,"

[One reason is] its dishonesty, its absolute untruthfulness, its deep-dyed insincerity. It still claims to believe, and even believes it believes, a whole lot of out-grown doctrine which it has long since thrown away. Preachers, overawed by the conservatism of their influential contributors, do not hesitate to declare over and over positions which they know to be false. It seems cruel to blame these preachers because the loss of their places may mean loss of bread and butter for their families. Most laymen do not read, do not think, and yet presume to assert their intellectual opinions and prejudices blatantly, and browbeat their ministers into cowardly subjection. . . . A dishonest church and a cowering ministry can never lay hold upon a stalwart generation of men and women.⁵

This statement is seen by the unbiased observer to be an overstatement of the case. Churchmen are not cruel, ignorant taskmasters "browbeating their ministers into cowardly subjection," and insincerity is not an outstanding characteristic of ministers as a class. An examination was made anonymously during this study of the beliefs of ministers of the Disciples of Christ in Los Angeles, and they were found to be almost if not quite as conservative in their beliefs as were their parishoners.

Modernists have never been able to organize as strong an organization as the World Christian Fundamentalist Association, but they have literally dotted the world with new sects and "isms" and have done much to prepare the religious world for institutional change. Modernists are usually in the vanguard of new religious movements while Fundamentalists are the "pillars" supporting the accepted religious institutions.

III. The *Progressive* is the religious type who has avoided the extreme conservatism of the Fundamentalist

⁵ Burris A. Jenkins, "Twenty-one Years," (a sermon) *The Christian*, Vol. V, No. 46, p. 741.

and the radicalism of the Modernist, and has achieved a constructive combination of the two traits of intellectual ability and emotional stability and balance beyond the reach of either Fundamentalist or Modernist. While relatively few in number, as Thomas has pointed out about the Creative type,⁶ the Progressive is influential far out of proportion to his numbers, for he achieves a working relationship with both of the other religious camps and leads them toward a common goal.

The traits of the Modernist and the Progressive are often confused. The following chart may help to disentangle the two by placing them side by side for comparison.

CHART IV

DISTINGUISHING TRAITS OF MODERNIST AND PROGRESSIVE

Modernist

Antagonistic attitude toward older religious beliefs and exaggerated loyalty to newer religious beliefs; a corresponding conflict attitude toward Fundamentalists.

Like the Fundamentalist, he tends to evolve a *closed* system of beliefs and to erect emotional barriers against data which do not fit his system.

Overlooks the basic value of older religious beliefs in focusing on their weaknesses; correspondingly, he minimizes the virtues of the Fundamentalist and exaggerates his faults.

Advocates and attempts extreme reforms which blindly disregard the older values and which arouse the antagonism of the Fundamentalists.

Progressive

Open-minded evaluative attitude toward older religious beliefs and newer religious beliefs alike; a corresponding coöperative conciliatory attitude toward Fundamentalists.

He tends to evolve a *tentative* system of beliefs which involves a constant search for new ideas by which he may test the validity of his system of beliefs.

Distinguishes carefully between the values and weaknesses of the older religious beliefs, and of the Fundamentalist type, and tends to assign the proper values to each; his criticisms are constructive, attempting to develop the better traits.

Is content to work out milder reforms which recognize the values of the older beliefs and which win the coöperation and support of the Fundamentalists.

⁶ See Thomas and Znaniecki, *op. cit.*, p. 1903.

"I am holding tight to my older religious beliefs until I can find something better," writes a perplexed college student who is trying to work out his religious concepts so that they will agree with his newly found knowledge. This attitude, made permanent by an ever-growing mind and made stable by the gradual accumulation of a relatively permanent set of beliefs tested by experience, is the attitude of the truly Progressive type.

B. INACTIVE CHURCH MEMBERS

I. The *Backslider* is the religious type whose beliefs, like those of the Fundamentalist, have not changed in spite of the fact that his religious institution does not fit his environment, but who has become inactive because of superior demands of other needs and institutions or because some shocking crisis not involving religious beliefs but associating the church in an unpleasant experience has dulled his loyalty to the church but not affected materially his religious beliefs. He is, like the Fundamentalist, ruled more by his emotions than by his intellect, and the difficulty which results in his inactive rôle as a member of the church is not a matter of religious beliefs or creeds as in the case of the Heretic, who will be the next type described.

Common illustrations of this type are the college student, or the country-dweller who moves to the city, who was a leader in religious life at home but is in an environment where strong demands competing with religious activities are made upon his time and attention. Although the validity of the older religious beliefs is never questioned, religious loyalty is gradually undermined by competing interests and activities.

II. A *Heretic* is defined by Webster's *New International Dictionary* as "One who holds to a heresy; especially one

who having made a profession of Christian belief, deliberately and pertinaciously upholds a doctrine varying from that of his church, or rejects one prescribed by his church." For our purposes, the Heretic may be thought of as the religious type who, like the Modernist, has reacted against the conservative position of the Fundamentalist, but unlike the Modernist, having insufficient emotional ties to hold him, has deserted the church. There are many more Heretics than Modernists because it is much easier to drop out of an unpleasant situation than to stay and try to make conditions better. While the stumbling block for the Backslider is predominantly experiential and emotional, for the Heretic it is predominantly intellectual and theological.

In a church of the fundamentalist type, I was taught that the pastor was a "constituted authority of the church, a chosen messenger and interpreter of the Word of God." I established an attitude of faith in him. (1) The pastor taught that Genesis must be accepted literally, that all men are equal, etc. (2) I have had occasion to study Comparative Anatomy, Cosmology, and Psychology, and in accordance with various of their primary concepts am forced to believe that the pastor was utterly in the wrong. (3) In the light of this new experience and knowledge and because of what the pastor taught, I must conclude that he was a stupid man, an ignorant man, an emotionally prejudiced man or a deceitful man. And if he possesses any of these traits, I cannot have unquestioning faith in him. Hence, my attitude is one of suspicion and doubt.⁷

In this case, as in all such cases of difficulty, the Heretic does not recanvass the situation to divide the valid beliefs from the invalid ones, but rather becomes suspicious and doubtful of the total situation and all its elements.

III. The *Individualist* is a religious type who has broken with organized religion through some historically explainable cause, but who is sufficiently capable intellectually

⁷ From a student's paper in a course in Sociology of Religion at the University of Southern California.

and stable or balanced emotionally to be able to work out a private religious system which is adequate for his religious needs.⁸ Under more favorable environmental conditions the Individualist would have become a Progressive working with organized religion toward the solution of the problems of the church. Like the latter, the Individualist is relatively rare in a given group, for the simple reason that there are relatively few people with his superior intellectual and emotional qualities.

Mr. C. is the son of a family from a well known and distinguished line of Christian leaders. He has had an excellent religious heritage. His fine personal abilities have won for him a place of high prominence on a large university faculty. His earlier years were spent as an active member of the church. Until his interest began to wane in the church, he held positions of trust and leadership in it, such as those of church elder and Bible School teacher.

But gradually it became apparent to him that he was not in full agreement with the beliefs and practices of the church. A series of incidents stretching over a period of years gradually undermined the earlier religious integration which his childhood and youth had built up. "No one experience stands out as particularly significant," he writes, referring to this disintegrating process, "but perhaps the final touch was given by an incident in a Bible School class.

"I was invited to give a series of three lectures in a Men's Bible Class. The group turned out to be a highly emotionalized conservative group, though it was in one of our leading churches. The first lecture was rather coolly received. The second lecture received such a poor response that I excused myself and did not deliver the third lecture. I came away from this experience feeling 'Oh, what's the use?' "

Mr. C. sums up his present attitude toward the church as follows:

My present attitude is friendly, but rather indifferent. I really find that I am not interested in what they are doing, and do not feel

⁸ The term "individualist" was borrowed from W. I. Thomas. See his definition in *The Unadjusted Girl* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1923), p. 86.

the need of worshipping with the church. I have a definite feeling of "not belonging" and a slight feeling of *embarrassment* when I attend a service.

When asked if he had any technique of his own for meeting his religious needs, he replied:

I have a sort of meditation period—usually late in the evening. I often read Plato, Browning, or the Bible. And in this time I try to fit together and balance the whole of life. It is not prayer, but it is not far from it.

CHAPTER IV

RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONAL TYPES

WHY, one may well ask, do diverse religious institutional types exist in our present culture system? A basic answer is found in the all-pervading social change, which is likewise responsible for the religious personality types described in the foregoing chapter.

In a relatively static homogeneous society where outside communication is not sufficiently important to undermine the established order, few, if any, religious nonconformists are to be found because the accepted beliefs and practices diverge little or none from the needs of the members of the group; and where there are no religious nonconformists, no diverse institutional types exist.

His [the savage's] moral code lays down a definite line of behavior, and there are no shades of interpretation possible. It is either right to do a thing, or wrong. Mitigating circumstances are rarely allowed as excuses for breaking a tabu. Furthermore, there is never any difference between public opinion and the code of right conduct. There is, thus, little occasion for the savage to stand out against public opinion. In a homogeneous group there is not one belief for the majority and another for the minority, with the possibility of a selection of the right from the wrong. Public opinion is the code.¹

The medieval Church was a very different institution from the modern church, whether Catholic or Protestant. . . . Every one was required to belong to it, just as we all must belong to the state today. One was not born into the church, it is true, but he was ordinarily baptized into it before he had any opinion in the matter. All western Europe formed a single religious association, from which

¹ A. M. Tozzer, *Social Origins and Social Continuities* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1925), p. 237. See also W. McDougall, *The Group Mind*, 1920, pp. 364-65; W. McDougall, *Introduction to Social Psychology*, 1921, p. 219.

it was a crime to revolt. To refuse allegiance to the Church or to question its authority or teachings was reputed treason against God and was punishable with death.²

This tyranny of a static society over its individual members, or of the religious institution over its members, is endured willingly, because the institution is satisfying its members' needs. It is their trusted guide, and as such they have no reason to wish release from it—indeed, release would be most distressing to them.

But suppose the aforementioned savage is visited one day by a rich and strangely powerful white man who inspires his confidence and then insists that the former's religious beliefs are untrue. Suppose the medieval Catholic is reasonably convinced that the earth is round instead of flat as his trusted religious leaders have told him. Or suppose he sees an "infallible" pope degrade his office and then torture to death a daring Savonarola who publicly speaks his protest.³

Such occurrences upset the smooth-running social machinery by digging away the foundations of loyalty of individuals to their institution. It is at the appearance of such disorganizing elements that diverse personality types take form. Diverse religious institutions must yet await a slowly developing group consciousness among these personality types.

At first, only a few isolated intelligent individuals recognize the inconsistency of the older beliefs and practices. But public opinion stands solidly against them, dubbing those who make such incredulous attacks upon its sacred institutions "infidels" and "atheists."

² James Harvey Robinson, *Introduction to the History of Western Europe* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1902), I, 201.

³ Illustrations of disturbing factors in religion in more recent times are the theory of evolution, historical criticism of Biblical literature, substitution of urban environmental stimuli for rural.

Mr. Hart, the only avowed infidel of Kirksville at that time, [was] a man of whom youth spoke almost with abated breath and who, in their mental category, was classed with the haunted house on the outskirts of the town. Not that he was a bad man or dishonorable, or one not esteemed by the community. He was of unimpeachable moral character and business integrity, but he didn't believe in God and he didn't care who knew it.⁴

If the disorganizing elements in the established order go unheeded by an unwise or unintelligent leadership, or if these elements are too numerous or powerful to be assimilated in the established order, the "infidels" will increase in number until they achieve a measure of like-mindedness which will act as a counterforce against the public opinion which outlawed them. At this point the restraining power of public opinion tends to weaken, and this in turn makes it easier to recruit members to the non-conformists.

At some point in this process, possibly at many points, an intellectual individual who has discovered the inconsistency of his beloved institution in the face of new knowledge or new practices attempts to change the institution so that it will assimilate this new material and once more effectively serve his religious needs. But his first move is necessarily directed against a sacred belief or form, and he is faced with a strong conservative opposition. If the process of differentiating personality types has gone far enough, a sufficient number of like-minded nonconformists will rally to his support to form the nucleus of a new institution. And at this point the time is ripe for the rise of diverse religious institutional types.

From this process, two religious institutional types result: The Conservative churches and the Radical churches.

⁴ Libby Travers, *Sectarian Shackles* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926), p. 68.

1. The *Conservative* type of church, which clings to its sacred heritage in spite of its inconsistencies, is largely made up of members of the older denominational groups, and ranges all the way from the extreme reactionary groups to the fairly liberal groups, none of which, however, get very far—as a group—from the older beliefs and practices. This is by far the more numerous group, and it will doubtless remain so unless social change becomes much more rapid, causing the type to lag too far behind the cultural development of the time. In Los Angeles, the extreme conservatives are illustrated by the Los Angeles Bible Institute and by the reactionary wings of the older Protestant groups. The more liberal Conservatives include the majority of the older Protestant churches in the city.

2. The Radical type of church throws overboard the sacred heritage held so carefully by the conservatives, and attempts to manufacture a new system out of a few shreds it has retained from the old, plus any new materials which happen to present themselves.

Anxious souls are groping about in every direction, thinking in each new thing to find that certainty which they so much long for. We have here an explanation for the present popularity of strange and irregular cults. New Thought, Theosophy, Christian Science, Spiritualism and a host of lesser *isms* afford a promise of escape from unbearable uncertainty. Ideas from the Orient and antiquity, and the lore of primitive witch doctors, are dragged out, renovated, and dressed in modern garb to satisfy the cravings of restless human souls.⁵

Los Angeles is unusually prolific in the production of these radical religious groups, both as an incubator and

⁵ P. A. Parsons, *An Introduction to Modern Social Problems* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1924), p. 228. See also Woodbridge Riley, "New Thought," *American Mercury*, January, 1924.

a haven for such groups as the following, taken from the city directory:

Brotherhood of Light	Anybody's California Adonijah
Church of Divine Power	Church of the People
Institute of Religious Science	Modern Church
Christadelphian Ecclesia	Rosicrucians
America-Jerusalem	Rapid Bible Mission
Church of the First Born of the United Sons of the Almighty	

There are few if any truly *Progressive* churches, owing to the fact that there are so few superior individuals in a population group who can qualify as Progressive, and also because the truly Progressive individual tends to join himself to either a radical or conservative group and try to hold the one back or urge the other forward. The lack of a Progressive institutional type causes these individuals much discomfort, but is a legitimate cost of keeping the church a folk institution. The best they can hope to do if they remain in the church at all is to help "bend" these groups in the direction of their beliefs.

The Conservative type of church, if not more interesting, is more important numerically than the Radical type. In this study of the Disciples of Christ in Los Angeles, the fourth largest Protestant religious group in the city (which may be considered as typical of Protestant churches in Los Angeles in this connection), all forty local churches were found to be quite clearly Conservative.

A further differentiation of these churches was attempted by using a scheme worked out and popularized by H. Paul Douglass⁶ which classifies churches according to their *range of activity*. However, this method was found to be quite superficial for this purpose from the viewpoint

⁶ *One Thousand City Churches* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1926), p. 91.

of social psychology. A more satisfactory classification was achieved by differentiating them according to their *range of beliefs*. In this way it was discovered that fifteen churches were *reactionary* conservatives and twenty-five were *liberal* conservatives.

A series of objective tests was then applied to these two groups of churches to discover their similarities and differences. Space will permit but a brief summary of the findings of this study.

I

GENERAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN REACTIONARY CONSERVATIVES AND LIBERAL CONSERVATIVES

a. *Size*. The liberal churches are more numerous, there being 25 such churches as compared with 15 reactionary churches in the group studied. Moreover, the individual churches in the liberal group are larger in membership than the other group.

b. *Age of Churches*. No outstanding difference was found in a comparison of the age of the two groups of churches. This holds for both the church as a group and for the buildings in which they meet.

c. *Growth*. The liberal churches had a higher rate of growth during the period from 1913 to 1929 than the reactionary group.

II

ECOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN REACTIONARY CONSERVATIVES AND LIBERAL CONSERVATIVES

a. *Distribution*. There is no natural area of the city into which either of these two kinds of churches is segregated, so far as this study shows. Each group is about equally distributed over the city.

b. *Mobility*. The study revealed a low rate of mobility of all churches. Only 3 of the 40 churches now in existence have ever moved out of the communities in which they were planted. Seven other churches moved their location but remained in the same community.

c. *Type of Neighborhood*. No relationship was found between the kind of church and the number of churches in the same neighborhood. However, it appears that the nearer a church is to the center of the city (with the exception of the expensive down-town sites) the more churches there are to be found in a radius of six blocks. No noticeable "adhesion" was found between the churches of the denomination studied and those of other denominations.

d. *Compactness*. The reactionary churches display a stronger tendency toward compactness of membership (geographically) than the other group. It appears from the study that the smaller the church the less its power to draw its members from a distance and hence the more compact its membership. In general, the nearer a church is located toward the center of the city, the smaller the percentage of membership living within a mile of the church.

III

LEADERSHIP DIFFERENCES BETWEEN REACTIONARY CONSERVATIVES AND LIBERAL CONSERVATIVES

a. *Tenure*. Although a study of the number of ministers per church in the last ten years disclosed no significant difference between the reactionary churches and the more liberal ones, a study of the length of present and previous pastorates of each church indicated a higher mortality rate for reactionary churches. The larger, more stable churches are the only ones which employed minis-

ters for a period of 8 to 14 years. Sixty per cent of the present ministers in all the 40 churches have been in their present positions one year or less. If the complete cycle of a minister's employment is represented by the length of the pastorate previous to the present incumbent, then the average length of time a minister's position lasts in the group under consideration is slightly less than two years.

b. *Salary.* Liberal ministers are paid better than reactionary ministers; the average yearly salary for the former is \$2,412 and for the latter is \$1,496. The average (mean) for the 38 churches reporting is \$1,954. However, the modal average for the 38 churches falls between \$900 and \$1,200 per year. Six liberal churches pay their ministers over \$3,000 yearly, while the highest salary paid a reactionary minister is \$2,760.

c. *Periodicals.* Liberal ministers subscribe for more periodicals, both religious and secular, than their rivals. Moreover, the two groups tend to subscribe for different journals. The favorite of the reactionary group is the *Christian Standard* (the organ of the ultraconservative group in the group at large), but the favorite of the liberal group is the *Christian Evangelist*, with the *Christian Century* running second. Three reactionary and 20 liberal ministers subscribe for the *Christian Evangelist*, and 12 liberal ministers and no reactionary ministers subscribe for the *Christian Century*.

d. *Education.* The educational equipment of these ministers averages low, with over one-fourth without any college degree, with one-fourth reporting the M.A. degree, with slightly less than one-fourth reporting the B.D., and with one minister possessing a Ph.D. As would be expected, the reactionary ministers rank distinctly lower than the liberal ministers.

e. *Previous Occupation, Years of Service, Age.* No distinct differences were noted between these two groups of ministers in comparing their previous occupations, years of service, and age.

Finally, this study gives a distinct basis for optimism for those who wish to see a progressive adaptation of the Conservative churches to changing religious needs. The liberal conservatives were found to be larger and more numerous and characterized by a higher rate of growth; they keep their ministers longer and pay them higher salaries than their reactionary rivals. Their ministers, in turn, subscribe for more periodicals, both religious and secular, and their selection is more "liberal," and, as would be expected, they have a better educational equipment than the reactionary group of ministers.

CHAPTER V

ADAPTING THE CHURCH TO THE CITY

ALTHOUGH no one factor, apparently, is responsible for the situation that has been described in the preceding chapters of this study, the most important element of all is the fact that the city's churches have but recently migrated from rural areas from which they have achieved a rural heritage which finds deep-seated expression both in their beliefs and their practices.

Because urban stimuli are different from rural stimuli both in number and type, urban attitudes and values differ also. As a result of a series of years of city life, personality itself is altered, and the urban personality calls for a different type of institutional expression. Religious institutions will succeed in the city only after they have been adapted to their new urban environment. The truths of religion are not changed in the process, but rather these truths are dressed up in urban clothes so they will be able to attract and serve the urban personality.

A study of the urban personality type in relation to this problem suggests the following changes in the church's approach to the urbanite.¹

1. *Efficiency* needs to receive more emphasis. This need cannot be neglected, as it has been in the past, in favor of personal sympathy and familiarity. In our machine age

¹ Be it remembered, however, that most church members living in cities are not well adjusted to urban life. One good evidence of this is the fact that if one begins at the suburbs of any large city and moves toward the center, the farther he goes the smaller the percentage of church members which he will find in the population. Therefore, the suggestions about to be given should be utilized slowly or gradually as the church takes on more and more the color of its environment. Moreover, the churches serving members living near the center of the city will find them useful in serving their more urbanized members before the churches in the suburbs where the urbanization process has not gone so far.

it is hard for the urbanite to excuse inefficiency. The urbanite desires to have his institutions function with machine-like precision and punctuality. This efficiency will pervade the whole fabric of the urbanized church's life and activity. It may be illustrated by reference to the church's handling of money. An auditor is an impersonalized, unsympathetic, efficient person whose official task is to hunt for errors in reports of treasurers. Many good churchmen, treasurers especially, find it difficult to appreciate an auditor. Yet the church's business in the city, dealing with urbanites, needs an auditor. Similarly, the old financial device for raising money for church matters by passing a collection basket does not key in with the impersonalized, unsympathetic, anonymous urban mind. The urbanite is trained by his daily experience away from such an approach. He is used to paying a stipulated fee at the lodge, at the theater, on the street car, or to the newsboy. No other organization asks him to put in just what he wants to; urban organizations do not thrive on such a basis. And a let-down occurs when he is given one chance in a hundred to give what he wants to. The urbanite puts in too many dimes and quarters instead of the larger amounts he would contribute if the church's financial affairs were more impersonal in their demands.²

2. *Traditional virtues and tabus* will receive less emphasis in a truly urban church. Instead, sin and virtue will be sought out at first hand.³ The city church may well dig deep for underlying truth as it applies to urban experience and as it helps the urbanite solve his deeper prob-

² The pledge system has helped some but does not go far enough. One of the most urbanized churches of the Disciples of Christ in Los Angeles is now considering setting a standard of giving for each member, thus trying to bridge the gap.

³ A streamer headline across the top of the front page of a Stage and Screen section of the *Los Angeles Evening Herald* (Saturday, May 10, 1930), announces

lems of life organization, for only in this way can it hope to attract the interest and loyalty of city dwellers. When the urban church makes this new alignment against urban sins and urban problems, its emotional motivating force will not be spent vainly by its devotees, and its emotional expressions will cease to be regarded by intelligent people as unnatural, and more or less ignorant, superstitious practices.

3. The *tempo* of religious practices needs to be speeded up so that they will key in with the swiftly moving urban mind. It is a common experience of the writer to observe critically the reactions of the more urbanized individuals, especially the younger church members, in the services for worship. They often manifest a rather well-defined restlessness and irritation which is at least partly due to this problem. The rituals proceed too slowly, and the preacher's main points in his sermon have been arrived at by his urbanized listeners long before they find utterance. This slower tempo, which is quite in keeping with the movement of the slower rural mind, is boresome and irritating to the adjusted urbanite. The problem of the tempo of religious practices is basic and applies to all parts of the church's program.

4. A *complex type of organization* is needed by the urban church in order to care efficiently for the diverse needs of a heterogeneous membership. H. Paul Douglass has

to the world: "TALKIE PUBLIC LIKES HONESTY," SAYS STAR

Narrow Rules of Conduct are Passé, Declares Norma Shearer

"Talkie audiences are commencing to appreciate honest stuff"—that is the opinion advanced by Norma Shearer in discussing. . . . her new picture, "The Divorcee." By "honest stuff" Miss Shearer means the complete image of life, as contrasted to the rose-colored substitute from which the movies have only recently dared to vary. . . ."

For the urbanite, there is a subtle bit of truth in Miss Shearer's preaching of "honest stuff." It finds him where he lives and discusses moral problems in terms which may shock the ruralite but which are meaningful to the urbanite, as box office receipts on this picture amply testify.

repeatedly pointed out this need in his writings and has discovered a distinct tendency on the part of the city church to develop a more complex organization.

This complex organizational tendency, however, needs to reach beyond the local church and include interchurch and interdenominational relationships. Just as big business has learned the advantages of coöperative unions, so religion may overcome the disadvantages of its isolation-mindedness in the interests of better efficiency. For just as the combative sect is the native of the isolated countryside, so the coöperative denomination and the federated denominational agency are native to the city. It seems reasonable to expect that as the urbanization of the church proceeds, church unity will accompany the process.

5. *A highly trained and diversified leadership* is another need of the urbanized church. This is a corollary to the need for a complex organization, but it is of equal importance. That this demand is real and that it is being met is evident from a comparison of the old rural church with the present increasingly complex and more highly organized church in Los Angeles. In the rural days of the Disciples of Christ both diversity of organization and trained leaders were emphatically frowned upon. In Los Angeles, today, however, there is an ever increasing tendency toward diversified organizations, and the leadership of the more urbanized churches includes highly trained ministers, directors of religious education, church visitors, ministers of music, young people's directors, and other workers.

It is difficult to predict just how far this demand for highly trained and diversified leadership for urban churches will go. There is some room for doubt that the old folk-ministry of rural days will be able to survive the rigid effi-

ciency demands of urban life. It is possible that, with the aid of the radio (and possibly television) and easy transportation facilities, the church, like the movie, may develop its "star" preachers and have at least this aspect of the church's service carried to a degree of specialization and centralization scarcely imaginable today.⁴

6. *Art* is increasingly necessary in appealing to groups of anonymous-minded urbanites. Very little art was used, nor was it needed, in the rural folk-methods of the church. The plainness of church architecture, furnishings, and ritual in the earlier days in the United States is too well known to need comment. In contrast, the movie, which is a distinctly urbanized social institution, has made supreme use of this technique, and may well be studied by the city church as an example in this respect. Dramatization, music, color schemes, decorations, architecture, and furnishings all may well receive careful consideration from the point of view of developing the artistic possibilities of the church. There is a rich field of possibilities commercially developed—largely by the theater—which lie ready at hand for the church to utilize. Beauty is itself one of religion's greatest allies and may be fully exploited by an urbanized church.

An implication of deep sociological significance is involved in this new trend of religious institutional development in the city. Following the lead of the late Charles H. Cooley, sociologists have generally held that primary groups "are fundamental in forming the social nature and ideals of the individual."⁵ Again, Cooley says:

⁴ Dr. Boris V. Morkovin, of the University of Southern California, in an address on "The Church and the Movies," delivered recently before a group of active ministers at the California Christian College, voiced his belief in the probability of such a development within the church.

⁵ Charles H. Cooley: *Social Organization* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909), p. 23.

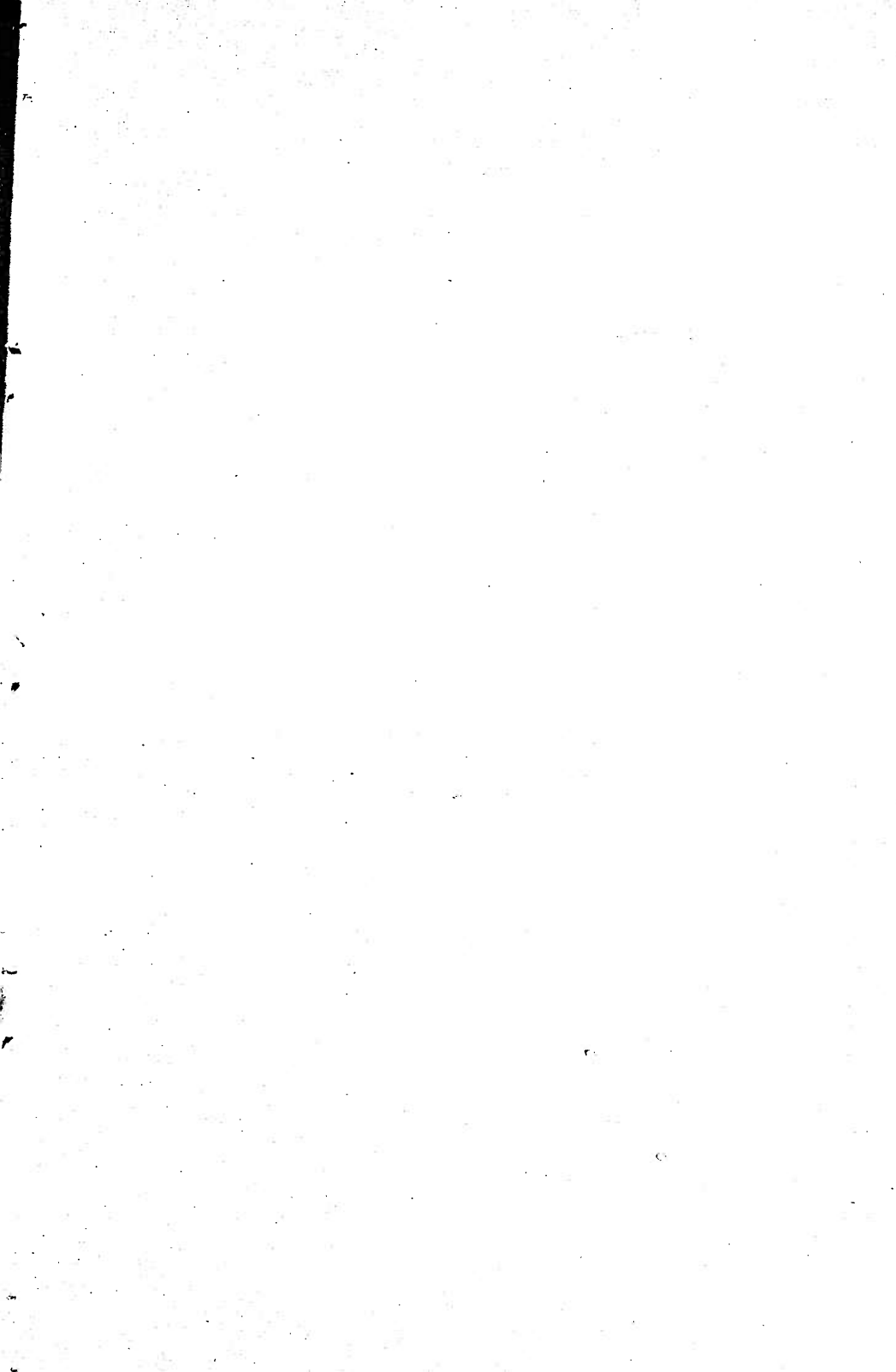
We are dependent for moral health upon intimate association with a group of some sort, usually consisting of family, neighbors, and some friends. It is the interchange of ideas and feelings with this group, and a constant sense of its opinions, that make standards of right and wrong seem real to us.⁶

While these statements are true of a society organized on a primary group basis, it is not at all proved that a society organized on a secondary group basis cannot develop its own technique of control. All social institutions in city life are undergoing rapid and sweeping change—and that change seems to be in the direction of a secondary group system. Is it possible that the church, one of our most conservative social institutions, may adapt itself to urban life on a modified basis that has a distinct leaning toward the development of a secondary group control system?

⁶ Quoted from Cooley by N. S. Hayner: "Hotel Life and Personality," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 33, (March, 1928), pp. 791-792.

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